



NEWS RELEASE

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09-013

FELON SENTENCED TO 57 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR FIREARMS CRIMES

Anchorage, Alaska – Acting United States Attorney Karen L. Loeffler announced that on February 5, 2009, Antoni Damian Peralta, a resident of Anchorage, Alaska, was sentenced in federal court in Anchorage to 57 months in prison for his conviction of being a felon in possession of firearms and ammunition.

United States District Court Judge Ralph R. Beistline imposed the sentence on Peralta, age 22. In previously filed court documents, Judge Beistline also ordered forfeiture of a 9mm Jennings semiautomatic handgun and the ammunition used to commit this offense.

According to information presented to the court by Special Assistant United States Attorney Erin White, the defendant's crime came to the attention of law enforcement on May 15, 2008. Anchorage Police Department officers working on a gang suppression detail stopped a vehicle containing four individuals. Peralta was one of the passengers. Officers knew Peralta, as he was a suspect in a 2005 Dimond Center shooting. When asked if he had any weapons, Peralta did not answer. A subsequent pat search revealed that Peralta had a semiautomatic handgun in his waistband. In addition to the firearm, law enforcement also found a baseball bat inside of the vehicle. The chamber of the firearm was empty, but the inserted magazine held seven live rounds. On March 2, 2006, Peralta was sentenced in the Alaska Court System for felony offenses of second degree robbery, first degree vehicle theft, and first degree failure to stop at the direction of a peace officer. On January 4, 2008, Peralta was released on parole.

Prior to imposing sentence, Judge Beistline noted the serious nature of the criminal actions in this case, as well as the defendant's lengthy criminal history and prior opportunities for rehabilitation. In emphasizing the fact that possession of firearms by a felon is a serious offense, Judge Beistline noted that other members of this community have a right to live in a safe environment.

Ms. Loeffler commended the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Anchorage Police Department for the investigation leading to the successful prosecution of Peralta. SAUSA White is one of two prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's Office who are funded by the Municipality of Anchorage for the purpose of prosecuting gang-related and violent crime cases.

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